

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn)
2. (Withdrawn)
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21. (Withdrawn)

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29. (Withdrawn)

30. (Withdrawn)

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Canceled)

34. (Canceled)

35. (Canceled)

36. (Canceled)

37. (Previously Presented) A method of treating a tumour in a colon using an electrosurgical system comprising:

an electrosurgical generator adapted to generate a radio frequency oscillating voltage output across first and second output terminals;

an electrosurgical instrument having an active tissue treatment electrode

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connected to the first generator output terminal;

fluid delivery means for delivering electrically-conductive fluid to the tumour to be treated; and

a return electrode connected to the second generator output terminal,

the method comprising the steps of:

enclosing, in a substantially fluid-tight manner, a space in the colon within which the tumour to be treated is located, and within which at least the active electrode is located;

operating the fluid delivery means at least partly to fill the space with electrically-conductive fluid;

operating the generator to apply a radio frequency voltage between the active and return electrodes, and completing at least a part of a conduction path between the active and return electrodes using the electrically-conductive fluid; and

manipulating the active electrode in the vicinity of the tumour to be treated;

wherein the space is enclosed by means of a flexible enclosing member which forms a seal with a portion of the colon.

38. (Original) A method according to claim 37, wherein the method further comprises the step of reducing the pressure within the space to a level below air pressure in the immediate vicinity outside the space.

39. (Previously presented) A method of treating a tumour in a colon using an

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electrosurgical system comprising:

an electrosurgical generator adapted to generate a radio frequency oscillating voltage output across first and second output terminals;

an electrosurgical instrument having an active tissue treatment electrode connected to the first generator output terminal;

fluid delivery means for delivering electrically-conductive fluid to the tumour to be treated; and

a return electrode connected to the second generator output terminal,
the method comprising the steps of:

enclosing, in a substantially fluid-tight manner, a space in the colon within which the tumour to be treated is located, and within which at least the active electrode is located;

operating the fluid delivery means at least partly to fill the space with electrically-conductive fluid;

operating the generator to apply a radio frequency voltage between the active and return electrodes, and completing at least a part of a conduction path between the active and return electrodes using the electrically-conductive fluid; and

manipulating the active electrode in the vicinity of the tumour to be treated;

wherein the space is enclosed by means of a flexible enclosing member which forms a seal with a portion of the colon; and

wherein the flexible enclosing member includes a proximal bung and a distal bung.

40. (Original) A method according to claim 39, including the further step of inflating the colon by delivering conductive fluid to the space through a first opening in the distal bung so that the tumour can be treated by the active electrode.

41. (Original) A method according to claim 40, including the further step of inserting into the space through the first opening an endoscope having a first channel for delivering the conductive fluid and a second channel for inserting the active electrode.

42. (Original) A method according to claim 40, including the further step of removing the conductive fluid from the space through a second opening in the proximal bung.

43. (Original) A method according to claim 37, wherein the flexible enclosing member is inserted endoscopically into the space through the colon's lumen.

44. (Previously presented) A method of treating a tumour in a colon using an electrosurgical system comprising:

an electrosurgical generator adapted to generate a radio frequency oscillating

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voltage output across first and second output terminals;

an electrosurgical instrument having an active tissue treatment electrode connected to the first generator output terminal;

fluid delivery means for delivering electrically-conductive fluid to the tumour to be treated; and

a return electrode connected to the second generator output terminal,

the method comprising the steps of:

enclosing, in a substantially fluid-tight manner, a space in the colon within which the tumour to be treated is located, and within which at least the active electrode is located;

operating the fluid delivery means at least partly to fill the space with electrically-conductive fluid, the space being enclosed by means of a flexible enclosing member which forms a seal with a portion of the colon;

operating the generator to apply a radio frequency voltage between the active and return electrodes, and completing at least a part of a conduction path between the active and return electrodes using the electrically-conductive fluid; and

manipulating the active electrode in the vicinity of the tumour to be treated; and

laparoscopically inserting a flexible sleeve to thereby surround a region of the colon containing the tumour to be treated and apply a second pressure against a first pressure resulting from the filling of the space with the electrically-conductive fluid.

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45. (Original) A method according to claim 44, wherein the flexible enclosing member includes a proximal bung and a distal bung and wherein the proximal and distal bungs form a pressure seal against both the colon and the pressure applied via the inflatable sleeve.

46. (Original) A method according to claim 44, wherein the active electrode is manipulated to remove the tumour and a region of the colon within which the tumour is located once the blood supply and lymphatics of the region have been disconnected.

47. (Original) A method according to claim 40, including the further step of inserting into the space through the first opening an endoscope having a fluid channel for delivering the conductive fluid and an instrument channel for inserting the active electrode.